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A Background Paper
on Behalf of
The Royal Commission
on the Northern
Environment.

Chapter

3

Economic Realities In An Untamed Land

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Chapter 3

ECONOMIC REALITIES IN AN UNTAMED LAND

Native people on many occasions before the Royal Commission expressed most eloquently their fears that large-scale development could destroy their traditional economic pursuits and culture. They favoured planning which would protect their wildlife, their wild rivers and their wild crops.

Meeting the needs of Indians and their communities is crucial to future resource development in northern Ontario. There are also the needs of non-native people who are able to live in the north because of development. These, too, merit recognition in their own right.

Because of greater public awareness and interest throughout the province, the stage is better set today for wise planning of the use of Ontario's land to best serve, through intelligent accommodation, the hopes and aspirations of the people of the north.

—Mr. Justice E. P. Hartt

Effective Planning—The Wisest Choice

A FLIGHT OVER ONTARIO would convince any visitors that the north is not all paper mills and gold mines. Also important are those economic activities which relate more directly to human needs and to the land. These include farming, hunting, fishing, trapping and wild rice harvesting.

Native people related to the Commission how they continue to follow their traditional pursuits and how their lives revolve around them. Other northerners acknowledged the significance of hunting, fishing, trapping and wild rice harvesting to the native people. They agreed that such individual or communal initiatives should not be restricted or ended by other resource developments.

In referring to the then Reed Ltd. interest in harvesting timber north of 50, many people voiced their fears that traplines in the 19,000 square mile area affected by the Reed Ltd. proposal could be destroyed by the harvesting.

Many native people believed that the interests of large industries inevitably would win out over those of the individual trapper, should there be conflict.

On another subject of economic interest, native people, in a number of submissions, stressed the importance to them of their near-monopoly in harvesting wild rice. Wild rice, they pointed out, was not only a major source of cash income in some areas, but also of social and cultural significance.

In inviting the Royal Commission to consider each economic pursuit in the north as valuable, effective planning of land and resource uses emerged in the hearings as the wisest possible course for avoiding damaging conflicts and harmful development.



What The Land Provides — Traditional Pursuits

Native people told the Commission how their economic and cultural survival depend upon their traditional pursuits of hunting, fishing, trapping, wild rice harvesting, and berry picking. Individuals and band leaders emphasized the importance and vitality of these activities. The economic, social, cultural and spiritual virtues of the traditional economy were compared and weighed against the benefits and costs of large-scale resource development in the north of Ontario. The best of both worlds was an expressed aim of those recognizing the need for development.

Conservation and Sharing — The Basis for Legends

Native legends often employ animals as story-telling symbols to help shed light on universal principles of nature and human behaviour. Those told in northern Ontario do help both native and non-native listener understand the Indian vision of the world, how native people see and use the land, what they know and fear about development.

An old Ojibway legend related to the Royal Commission speaks of a time long ago. The legend, the Commission was told, contains the essence of the Ojibway philosophy, the dependence of men and animals upon the land and respect for all that the land provides.

According to this legend, the rose once grew abundantly in the homeland of the Ojibway. There were roses of brilliant colours and infinite shades. So lovely was their fragrance that it made the bear dance and the hummingbird flutter its wings. So plentiful were the roses, and so faithfully did they blossom each spring, that the Anishnawbe began to take them for granted and sang no more songs praising them. Then one summer the number of roses decreased and their colour faded. The next year the rosebushes were even smaller, their growth stunted, the blossoms smaller and not as beautiful as before. But while the roses diminished in extent and beauty, the rabbits grew plentiful and healthy.

The Indian people dimly perceived that something was wrong, but were not sure what it was. It all happened in subtle quietness, while the Anishnawbe were busy hunting, trapping and building wigwams. In the meantime, the bee complained, the humming bird was hungry and the bear grew thin and its flesh became tough and stringy. There was not enough honey for man and bear, nor was the honey as delicious as it had been in previous times. Indeed, all the creatures of the land were touched.

A great meeting was called, and everyone invited. After long speeches of sadness about the plight of the roses, the assembly sent forth the hummingbird to look for a single rose. For a week, the bird flew, searching. Finally, it found one solitary rose clinging to the side of a cliff. The hummingbird brought the flower back to the meeting where, with care, the spiritual leaders revived the rose. Then the flower told them: "The rabbits, they ate all the roses."

The inhabitants of Anishnawbe country were furious. The bears, wolves and lynxes caught the rabbits and beat them until their ears were stretched and their mouths split open. At this point, the rose pleaded: "Stop. Our destruction was your fault too. If you had cared and watched, if you had not been so unconcerned, we would have continued to prosper. Let the rabbits be."

The rabbits were released, and though their wounds healed, they have carried the scars of their intemperance ever since. With time, the roses slowly were revived but they have yet to regain the power and glory of that earlier day. The fabled teacher and helper of the Ojibway, Nanabush, provided the rose with thorns to protect it in the future. And to the Anishnawbe, the wise teacher said: "Always remember, the plants of the land were here first, and they are the source of all animal life. Neglect them and you will perish too."

The Commission was told legends like this had been narrated for years to native children to teach them respect for nature and the need to live in harmony with the land.

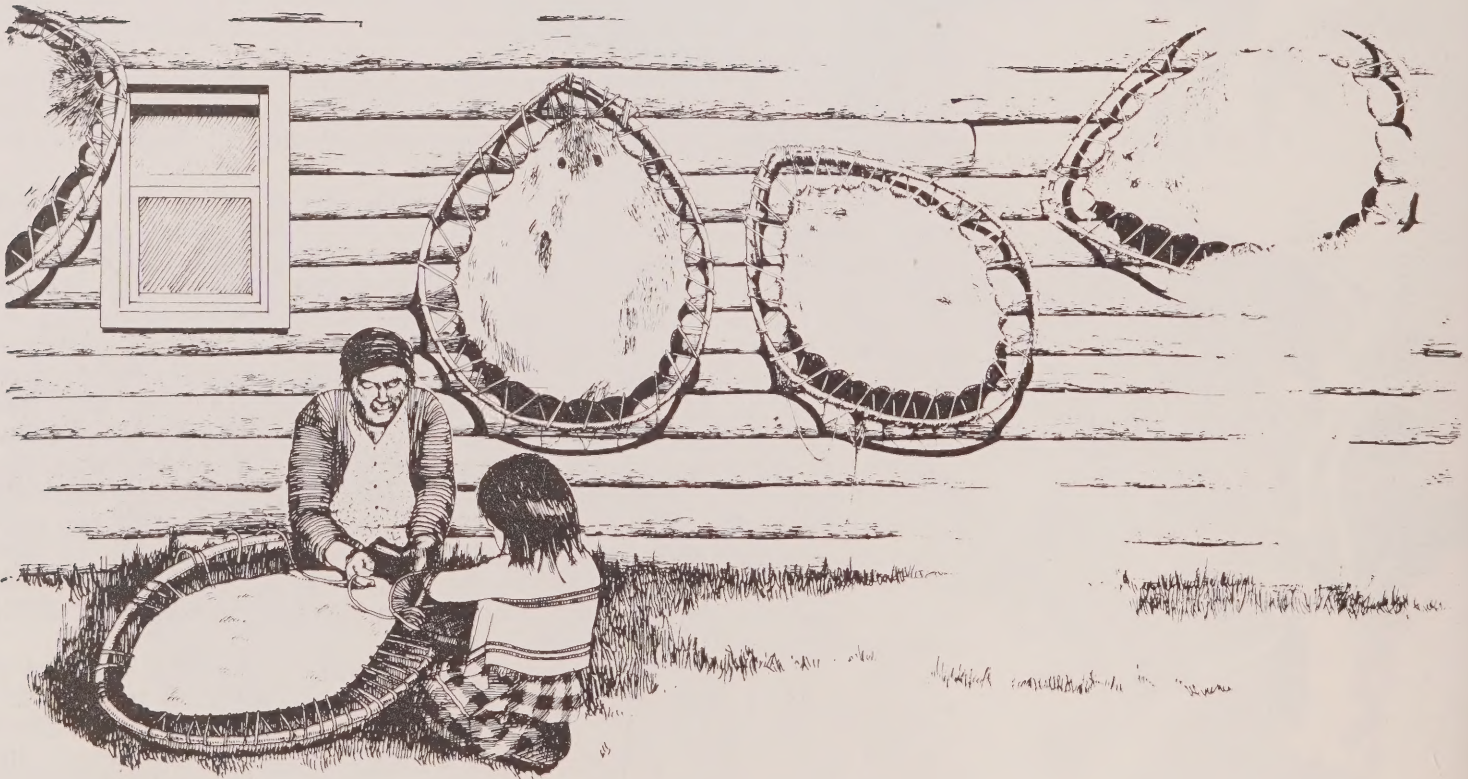
The moral drawn for the Commission was that people should take only what they need from Mother Earth and share these necessities with each other.

Many native people attempted to convey to Justice Hartt the hard work involved in reaping the resource harvests that sustained them. What some non-native people alluded to as muskeg and wasteland was described by native people as a bountiful land, a gift from the Great Spirit.

"Until the Great Spirit changes his plans, I will not let go of this land."

(Whitehead Moose, Sandy Lake, p. 2478)

It is this spiritual tie that causes the land to be so revered by the native people of Ontario north of 50.



"The Bush"—Food, Medicine and Spiritual Strength

By bush activities, northerners mean their harvesting the natural abundance of the land. The Commission heard descriptions of many bush activities such as trapping, hunting, fishing, berry picking, collecting wood and the gathering of wild rice.

The products of many bush activities are often consumed by the harvester rather than sold for cash or traded for goods. Their value does not always appear in the dollar estimates of economic achievements in the north. As the Ontario Trappers Association pointed out:

"We must not overlook the fact of the consumption of the meat of the animals. A recent survey conducted by the Ministry of Natural Resources showed that the replacement value of meat eaten by the trapper from the species of beaver, lynx and muskrat amounted to over 2.5 million dollars per year."

(Ontario Trappers Association, Timmins, p. 1215)

Undoubtedly these products are vital to many:

"When the Great Spirit made the Indian he gave the Indian everything in this earth that he needed to survive. He gave him the forest. The forest shelters the animals. The forest shelters my fellow men. The forest keeps my children warm. It keeps my people healthy."

(Chief Ben Quill, Sandy Lake, p. 2454)

Some Indian people spoke of a relationship between health and bush food:

"I can't live on the white man's food. I eat chicken and beef, but it doesn't give me strength. Because the Creator gave me the wild animals to sustain me, I relate to them. I was raised to be in harmony with them, both physically and mentally. I can't relate to a tin can. If you rob me of my source of strength, you rob me of my source of life."

(Fred Meekis, Sandy Lake, p. 2438)

And the intuitive answer gains support from scientific findings:

"Health and nutrition studies . . . in northern Canada . . . have shown . . . all Arctic and subArctic populations secured in their traditional diets all the essential nutrients, minerals and vitamins . . . Poor nutrition is responsible at least in part for many of the stereotyped characteristics of Indians: these being shiftlessness, indolence and inertia. This decline in health has been linked . . . to a deteriorating diet of the bush Indians . . . The increased use of store food is the cause of this deterioration."

(University of Waterloo, Department of Man-Environment Studies, Toronto, p. 1975)

What the Commission came to appreciate through listening to the native people was the extent to which the land is still used for what they call "traditional pursuits." The bush provides food, medicine and spiritual strength to those whose life still revolves around the bush:

"The bush is important for far more than food . . . We get medicines and find they are a lot better for us than the medicines that we get from the nurses."

(Chief Ben Quill, Red Lake, p. 647)

There was much discussion and varying views at the hearings about bush activities; how extensive they were, what the impact on them of large-scale resource development had been, and what people feared would happen in the future:

"In Ear Falls, Justice Hartt, you heard that we do not use the land anymore. But this is not true. In the month of November to December 1977, we trapped 1,032 beaver, 268 mink, 174 marten, 39 otters, 115 fishers and 81 lynx, and this is not a complete count. Over 40 families earned about \$70,000.00. Last summer, the people of Pikangikum and Poplar Hill caught 130,000 pounds of fish, worth almost \$100,000.00. Last fall, we collected about 2,000 pounds of wild rice worth \$1,600.00 to us and at least \$10,000.00 to the trader. Eighty per cent of the families of Pigangikum Band trap and 50 per cent fish. Only 36 people have full-time jobs. The land is important. The land is our life."

(Chief Ben Quill, Sandy Lake, p. 2454)

Trapping is an important bush activity in the north:

"Ontario is the largest producer of wild fur in all of Canada. Ontario's production exceeded an estimated \$11 million worth of wild fur in the year 1976-77, which makes up approximately one-quarter of Canada's entire production. Northern Ontario produced approximately 14 per cent of Ontario's harvest of a total estimated value of \$1,471,118.00."

(Ontario Trappers Association, Timmins, p. 1214)

Without estimating the future potential for trapping in the northern half of Ontario, the Ontario Trappers Association stated that:

"We must exercise great caution in developing the north so as not to disturb the balance of nature, and to ensure a healthy animal population which will enable the native and northern trapper to maintain his culture, heritage and to insure that he has the opportunity to continue as his ancestors did in their way of life."

(Ontario Trappers Association, Timmins, p. 1216)

For some communities fishing is the economic mainstay:

"Commercial fishing is the main part of our economy . . . Not only do we sell to outside fish markets, but it acts as the staple food for our families . . . In the year 1976, fish sold was 361,044 pounds. In 1977, the total amount sold by all the communities fishing was 535,000 pounds."

(North Caribou Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1839)

Treaty #3 also stressed the importance of fishing:

"There are 14 commercial fishing licences issued to the Indian bands or Indian people on Lake of the Woods. The income from the walleye fishery constitutes a major proportion of cash income to these people and substantially supports the communities at Shoal Lake and Big Grassy."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2868)

Understandably, those who derive their livelihood from fishing and trapping fear anything that would disrupt or diminish their harvest:

"We make our living by commercial fishing. We have fished for 29 summers and we want this to continue. We don't want it to be stopped by water pollution or anything else that might kill our fish. We also make our living by trapping, and our young people grow up being taught, and learning how to trap. Our plea is that this will continue, and that the wildlife and game will not die out because someone kills the forests, or does anything else that will cause the wildlife to become rare. No one in our village (MacDowell Lake) is on welfare, and we want to keep it that way."

(Magnus James, Sandy Lake, p. 2427)

Fear of development, as it has occurred in the past, of pollution and clear cutting of the forest ran through a number of submissions to the Commission:

"I know the animals in the bush and I want to tell you what will happen if Reed cuts down the bush and if the rivers are dammed. If a large area of bush is cut down, the land animals would disappear. They would open spaces and it is so cold in the winter and so hot in the summer . . . If they cut down the trees the beaver will go . . . If you find the land is flooded you won't find beaver or muskrat . . . The fish can't live if the water is polluted or where there is a dam."

(Chief Ben Quill, Red Lake, p. 646)

The people feared the loss of the animals and fish upon which they depend:

"If you destroy the trees by cutting them to make a

road for the pipeline or to make paper for the Americans, you will destroy the animals. You will destroy the land. We cannot allow this to happen."

(North Spirit Lake Band, Sandy Lake, p. 2396)

A non-native trapper who spoke to the Commission at Sioux Lookout expressed concern that Reed Ltd. might be given cutting rights to 19,000 square miles:

"That is in an area that comprises in number about 300 trapping grounds and as far as I can see if they are cut, then these 300 trapping grounds are gone down the drain."

(Wilf Wingenroth, Sioux Lookout, p. 151)

Not only the animals, but the fish, have suffered as a result of development and industrial pollution:

"We have seen sturgeon fishing areas destroyed with wood fibre from the pulp mills. We have tasted the phenol-contaminated fish from Clay Lake and Rainy River and become sick from eating them. And we have also eaten the mercury-contaminated fish from the English-Wabigoon River system, and the world knows the result of that."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2871)

Those people who have experienced the devastation of mercury pollution told the Commission of its effects:

"Mercury has caused us untold unhappiness because of its effects on our way of life. In 1970, quite without warning, and because of mercury pollution, commercial fishing was banned on our river system. For us this was not simply a loss of economic livelihood. It represented the loss of our lifestyle . . . Family life revolved around commercial fishing, year in and year out. Now this is gone. Gone too is much of the guiding . . . Mercury has also meant for many of us the loss of our normal food source. To eat the fish is to eat poison, yet for years, indeed centuries, we have lived off this fish."

(Anti-Mercury Ojibway Group, Whitedog, p. 2820)

It is not only the forest industry which has disturbed the livelihood of those dependent on the land. Mining has also made itself felt:

"But now, our riches are disappearing. We can't hunt and trap like we used to; there are too many surveyors and prospectors around the traplines. They stay all summer and part of the winter. We know they have been there by the tin cans and refuse they have left behind. They don't even allow time for the animals to return to the area before somebody else comes along. The number of animals I can bring in has been greatly reduced."

(Fred Meekis, Sandy Lake, p. 2438)

Another form of development which has seriously disrupted the land has been hydroelectric projects. Damage has occurred during the construction of dams and the resultant flooding:

"They [the white men] seem to have no respect for nature . . . One of the things that is a threat to the fish and animals is the dams."

(North Caribou Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1833)

The Whitedog Band has felt particularly affected by these developments. As one member described the situation to the Commission:

"Hydro's 'industrial development' only served to flood the lands of one of our reserves, One Man Lake, including homes, hunting and trapping grounds, fishing and wild rice areas, and graveyards. Hydro's so-called 'industrial development' only served to destroy a large part of our lifestyle and our security."

(Anthony Henry, Whitedog, p. 2800)

Sometimes, developments built in the north by southerners seem to overlook the value to northerners of the land and future harvests. It is this lack of concern for the long-term values of residents in an area which native people in particular find so incomprehensible:

"In 1955, the federal government of Canada decided to build a radar base in Winisk . . . the area they chose . . . was a very special spot for us; there were all kinds of berries: blueberries, cranberries, strawberries and gooseberries. There was also a burial ground . . . The bulldozers came in and destroyed everything. Our winter lodge was demolished . . . so that the radar base could be built. After ten years, the government decided to close the base. All of the white men went home, but they left so much destruction behind them."

(Winisk Band, Moose Factory, p. 3254)

In some disputes over how resources should be used, the Ministry of Natural Resources finds itself in the role of arbiter. Its response has been, in part, to formulate rules and regulations.

For some northerners, general rules caused frustration when they did not respond to local realities:

" . . . my father received a letter from the Ministry of Natural Resources stating that he had not caught his quota given by that department and they wanted to take the trapline from him . . . However, the letter never mentioned the fact that the Abitibi Paper Company was clear cutting the land in that area . . . When they do this, the animals all move because they have no protection from harsh weather and their feeding grounds have been destroyed."

(Ange Veilleux, Geraldton, p. 1435)

Native people find it difficult to understand why they should have to adhere to regulations governing activities in which they have always been involved. To them, their rights to pursue these activities are guaranteed in the treaties:

"Not long after the treaty, the Department of Lands and Forests, now known as the Ministry of Natural Resources, approached our people and chained them into a regulations prison. In this prison they were told that they could kill only a limited number of animals, trap only a handful of furbearing species and fish only up to a limit that was in the department's regulations. On top of all this, our people were told that they could not hunt, fish or trap without a licence."

(Wunnumin Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1886)

The Commission was told that the ministry's recent announcements on fishing licences were a source of particular frustration to native people who depend on this resource:

"The provincial government has come up with conclusions which mean drastic cutbacks for the Indian fishermen of Shoal Lake and Lake of the Woods. These fishermen and their forefathers have taken fish from these lakes for centuries, and they totally disagree with the so-called facts as established by the magical Morpheodaphic Index. Who is to be believed? Who are the experts? . . . If the Ministry of Natural Resources is in error with its productivity estimates and their cherished index is indeed wrong, then they are imposing economic catastrophe on my people . . . The government is allocating our fishing resources for the needs of the anglers at a tremendous cost to the commercial fisherman."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2867)

Robin Greene, Chief of Shoal Lake, told the Commission how the new quotas would affect his people:¹

"The letter [from the Ministry of Natural Resources] stated that commercial fishing quotas would be imposed beginning January 1st of this year. For 1978, the maximum catch of our pickerel under all five commercial fishing licences on Shoal Lake will be 68,000 pounds. We believe this means on-fifth of 68,500 or 13,700 pounds under one licence this year. The drop from 258,000 pounds in 1977 to 13,700 pounds in 1978, a cut of 95%, will destroy our commercial fishing industry. And in years following the 1978 quota is to be further reduced. Under this drastic pressure we have been forced to take direct action. We will not stand by and be driven into welfare. We have been fishing the Shoal Lake area for longer than anyone can remember, and we are careful never to fish it out."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2901)

¹On May 17, 1978, the Ministry of Natural Resources announced that it would delay for one year the quotas that it had previously set for Shoal Lake.

Not everyone was critical of the Ministry of Natural Resources' role in managing resources, however, and the Ontario Trappers Association had words of praise for the ministry's efforts in increasing the number of furbearers:

"According to our statistics there are more furbearing animals in Ontario now than when the white man first came to Ontario . . . This is the result of joint efforts of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Trappers Association in developing a true conservation policy over the past 25 years."

(Ontario Trappers Association, Timmins, p. 1211)

On the other hand:

"The people in Ottawa and Toronto sit in their offices making regulations and policies and yet they do not have a clear idea of how the people in the north live and how things really stand. They do not ask the Indian people first for their opinions."

(North Caribou Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1830)

Groups, such as the Northwestern Commercial Fisheries Federation, shared the native people's feeling that their interests are not well-served:

"... the meetings called by government to gain public input are a waste of time and a waste of taxpayer's money, as well as an insult to the intelligence of our people. You see the decision had already been influenced and sealed by the 'wise man in the far east'."

(Northwestern Commercial Fisheries Federation, Kenora, p. 2526)

The problem seems to lie in determining whose interests will take priority. This is what the Ministry of Natural Resources has been trying to do but its efforts have not satisfied the native people, nor many of the non-natives who have taken to the bush. It boils down to a question of lifestyles and priorities, and inevitably decisions are made in the interests of the dominant society's attitudes. Native people recognize the essential difference between their lifestyle and that of the dominant society, and ask that their way of life not be destroyed:

"White people were given a certain lifestyle, the one that is based on industry, farming and working regular

hours, and they are meant by the Great Spirit to live this way. Indian people were also given a way of life, that of hunting, fishing, trapping and living off the land. One way of life should not destroy the other. We know that if we do not continue to use the kind of life we were given, it will be taken away from us."

(Cat Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1819)

The Commission heard pleas from people who saw their ability to continue their bush activities and their livelihood threatened by impending developments:

"Justice Hartt, I want you to help me. I don't want to see industry and development wreak havoc on me and my people. There is a waterfall about 17 miles from here. Now they're talking about damming that falls. If they dam that falls, that's the end of my trapline . . . My situation, sir, is identical to many in this vast land. If I lose my way of life, I lose what I was meant to be, and what I am."

(Fred Meekis, Sandy Lake, p. 2439)

Others had stronger words:

"As for the quotas, we will not consider fish taken from on-reserve waters to be included under our licence. We will report only those fish caught off the reserve. If this action is civil disobedience, then let the government arrest us. When the livelihood of an entire community is threatened it must protect itself."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2902)

There were non-natives as well who felt that the costs of development in terms of the disruption of the land and livelihood of those dependent upon it, are too great:

"I have seen the effects of logging on the environment. I have seen the changes that damming of the rivers have created. I have seen proud people lose their pride as a result of quick projects with temporary economic benefits. I have seen erosion of northern attitudes from those of sharing to those of 'every man for himself' which prevail in the south. I believe that under the present attitudes of government and industry, that development in the north is too expensive."

(Warner West, Moose Factory, p. 3333)

Agriculture—A Neglected Industry North of 50

There is very little farming north of 50. People who live there are nearly entirely dependent on food shipped up from the south at a very high cost. Increasing transportation costs and food shortages may combine to make the local production of food in northern communities more attractive. Knowledgeable people confirmed the potential of the land to sustain agriculture. What was lacking was the economic stimulus.

Doesn't It Pay to Grow Fruits and Vegetables?

To many northerners, fresh fruits and vegetables are luxuries. Proponents of northern agriculture believe that much more fresh produce could be grown north of 50. But few vegetables are now being cultivated north of 50, even under glass. The Royal Commission was often reminded during hearings that economic policies for the north were evolved to provide the raw materials which the south requires, and were not preoccupied with producing materials to serve local needs. Northerners on many occasions spoke of their region's economy as following a true colonial form, i.e., all energies are devoted to the extraction of resources for export, leaving little time, money or labour for local food production.

In a sense, the Commission was asked to help offset the public's misconception that the north is a barren place, incapable of sustaining agricultural activity. The truth is, say northerners, that what is produced in the north is not dictated by climate or topography but rather by economics.

It was argued that the north could move a long way towards agricultural self-sufficiency under a different set of priorities. Witness the "green revolution" of urban gardening in New York City, the cultivating of the desert in Israel and the transformation of Cuba from a sugarcane plantation into a diversified producer of food for local consumption. New soft technologies, such as hydroponics and use of waste heat to serve greenhouses, could significantly add to the north's agricultural potential if self-sufficiency is to become a goal for the north.

Year-round greenhouse agriculture was one of the undertakings recommended which could be concomitant with economic development in the north. All possibilities for growing food in the north should be seriously examined, the Commission was told, as ways in which high costs of living could be reduced.

Agriculture—Potential in the Future—Insignificance Today

Agriculture north of 50 prompted minimal discussion at the hearings apart from three presentations, two by representatives of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and one by Continental Hydroponics Ltd.

Agriculture, northerners regret, is not a significant activity in the north today. But the Commission was told that it had been more important in the past and that some potential exists for expansion in the future.

Agriculture came very early to the area north of 50:

"Agriculture has been carried out along the coast of James Bay since about 1688. The first attempts were by the Hudson's Bay Co. to provide winter supplies of root and cole crops. The Oblate fathers have also done some excellent work and around 1920, kept a dairy herd at Attawapiskat. There are also reports that Moose Factory Island had up to seven root houses in 1928."

(Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Timmins, p. 936)

While agriculture was practised at this time it was primarily to meet local needs and commercial agriculture never developed to any extent. Gradually, even this subsistence agriculture began to peter out:

"Agriculture followed other developments in the area and was clearly used to supplement the food basis of those who had come to mine the minerals and harvest the wood resources. As a result of improved transportation facilitating efficient food flow from the south and from the west, and the better income of alternate employment in forestry or mining, agriculture started to decline. Although a decline has occurred, most communities, all just south of the 50th parallel, still maintain a small number of enthusiastic farmers."

(Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Dryden, p. 445)

Most of the agricultural activity in the north occurs just south of 50. A ministry representative told the Commission that there is only one commercial dairy farm north of 50. However, contacts have been made with native people north of 50 and potential for agricultural production appears good. The ministry representative described his contacts with the Ogoki Band Council:

"Fresh milk is not now available on the reserve, therefore the band council wanted to know if they could keep some cows. I tried to indicate what was necessary in order for them to get into the dairy business.

Eggs are \$1.69 a dozen at Ogoki, so they were naturally interested in producing their own eggs . . . There are two small gardens on the reserve at the present time and they are wondering about expanding production, primarily in potatoes."

(Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Dryden, p. 452)

Agricultural production for other than local consumption by the producers is unlikely to increase unless certain factors change:

"Until economic circumstances dictate otherwise the present level of agricultural production will maintain itself. Indeed if energy and therefore transportation costs continue to rise, an expansion in agricultural activity might be expected near population centres due to proximity of markets. There is a great deal of land with agricultural capability which could be developed near, but still south of the 50th parallel . . . It would appear that agricultural development north of the 50th parallel is very unlikely until the quite distant future."

(Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Dryden, p. 451)

The ministry pointed out, however, that investments in farming should:

" . . . take into account the high cost of importing bulky crops (e.g., potatoes) from outside the region. Local production of potato by-products (e.g., potato chips) could be considered too, depending on the cost of such a processing industry."

(Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Timmins, p. 938)

A Timmins resident joined the ministry in its suggestion of diversification based on food products and by-products. Mike Zudel told the Commission that:

"One could visualize this Onakawana-Timmins area to be a large place, full of small food producers, small local manufacturers, meat packers, food processing, canning, large supplementers, if not a total self-sufficiency . . . doing what you can with what you have is hard to beat . . . Ontario's good farm land is gradually covered by concrete, and industry. Sooner or later, the northern areas will have to look into their own business of producing food industry for 2 reasons: 1) high cost of transportation; and 2) it could be done."

(Mike Zudel, Timmins, p. 2366)

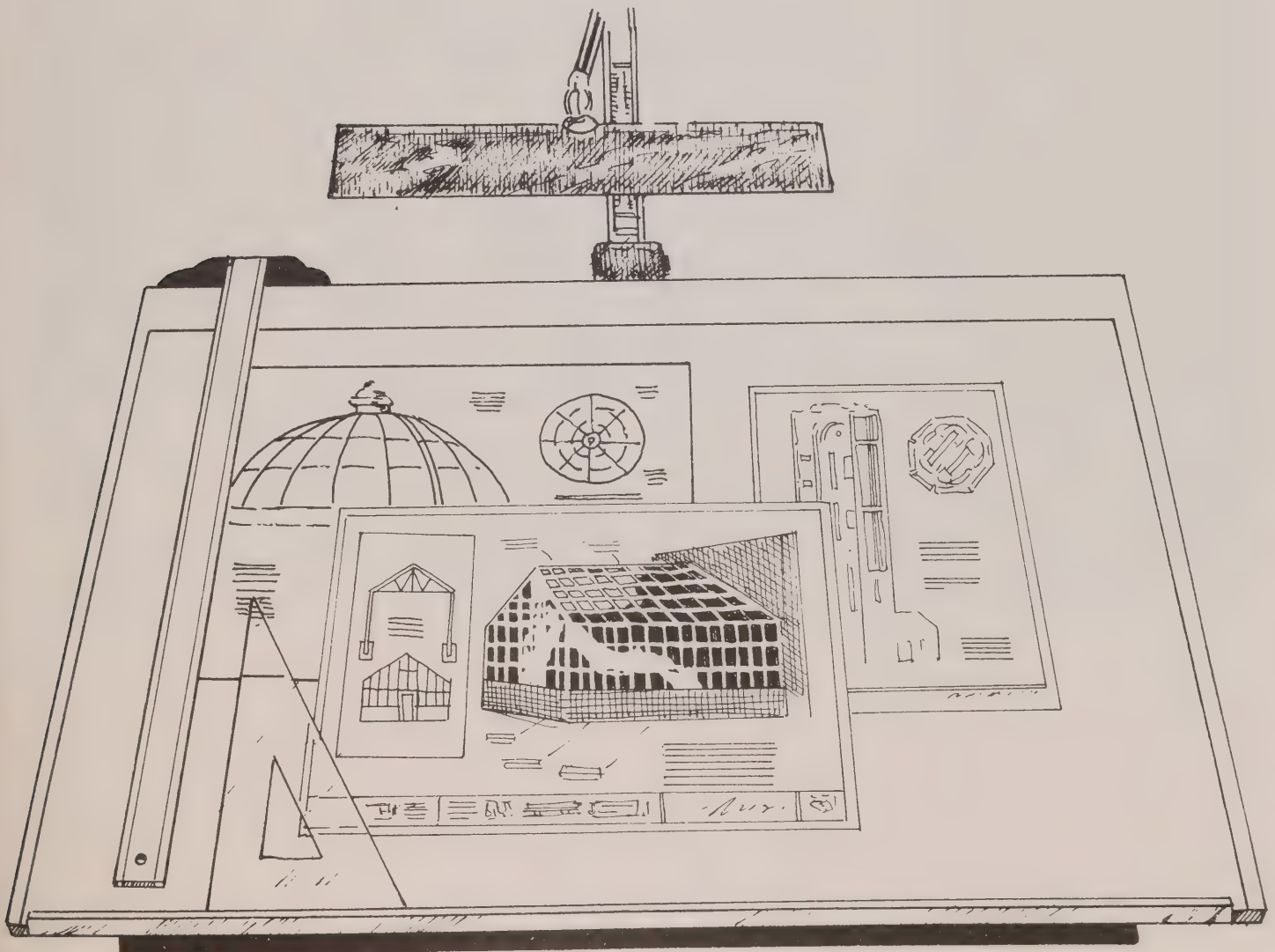
In Toronto, Gerald Rosenberg of Continental Hydroponics Ltd. took up the question of food production for the north. He argued that the time was quickly approaching when the north would no longer be able to depend on southern food imports, not only because of food shortages but because of escalating costs. To relieve this dependence on imports he advocated a hydroponic system:

"Our metroponic hydroponic system uses little water and very little energy. Moreover, the nutrient solution is recyclable. With our system of metroponic horticulture, northerners could grow abundant and nutritious fruit and vegetables all year round, recycling the nutrient solution every three weeks by draining it into tanks for the purpose of aquaculture, i.e., the raising of fish, fish that would not be polluted. The nutrient

solution feeds the fish, giving certain species a 30% faster growth than they would get in water. The same nutrient solution can then be recycled back into the system after having been enriched by nature's own fertilizer — fish droppings. We then have a continuous cycle of raising fish and producing nutritious vegetables at a low cost."

(Continental Hydroponics Ltd., Toronto, p. 2281)

The Commission was told that it was a matter of conjecture whether agricultural expansion will occur in the north or whether new methods of achieving self-sufficiency will be explored. Nevertheless, the option for a better performance in the future exists.





Wild Rice — A Route to Economic Self-Sufficiency

Wild rice has special significance to northwestern Ontario. In hearings held by the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, native people emphasized the need to protect what they see as their aboriginal right to harvest this native crop. A number of northern residents, mainly non-native, and the Ministry of Natural Resources consider that much larger amounts could be harvested than now gathered by the traditional hand-picking method. They urged that the crop be harvested mechanically and spoke of a potential \$20 million business. Native groups, while reflecting a similar ambition for larger harvests, sought special treatment for themselves in the matter of wild rice. They argued that making wild rice harvesting an exclusive Indian resource in the future would provide a stable economic base for several of their communities.

A Way of Life or a New Way of Living

When the “Manominee kigeesis” or harvest moon rises each year at the end of August, Ojibway people in northwestern Ontario pick wild rice by the canoe and flailing method, a practice followed for centuries.

The Commission was asked to acknowledge that non-native people also harvest wild rice — in the area outside of the Lake of the Woods and nearby lakes. Some employ the native method to pick rice for their own use. Other commercial harvesters use homemade mechanical pickers — motor boats, usually with screened speed-heads on the front that catch the falling rice as the picker drives through the stands of rice.

To harvest wild rice, whether commercially or for personal use, requires a special licence issued under the Wild Rice Harvesting Act, at the discretion of the Ministry of Natural Resources. This identifies wild rice as a provincial resource of all the people of Ontario. Presently, natives have licences for the traditionally harvested and most productive stands of wild rice areas in the Lake of the Woods area. Only a few non-natives have sought and received licences for other areas.

At its hearings, the Commission learned of the apprehensions of native people of repetition in the case of wild rice of what they see as a familiar pattern in regard to other resources. Licencing of what had always been for them a free and traditional activity would be followed by a quota system. Non-natives would meet their quotas and press for more, and the natives’ share would, in time, become proportionately less and less. Native people expressed their fear of being expelled from their near-monopoly on wild rice and they extolled the place of wild rice harvesting in their culture and religious traditions.

From non-native representatives, the Commission heard wild rice described as a resource that was going to waste, about small harvests when crops were good. Some non-natives contended that no one should have preferential rights to harvest a resource that belongs to all Ontarians.

The debate over who should be able to harvest wild rice, and how, was considered by some observers as a classic tug-of-war between modern technology, mechanical harvesters and mechanical processors pitted against the traditional methods of hand-picking, home processing of the grain; the possible enrichment of some enterprising individuals set against the socio-economic involvement of almost all members of a community. How, they asked, can one weigh what would be lost against what might be gained?

The Commission was impressed that the native people's access to wild rice should be protected and so declared itself. Following recommendations in the Commission's Interim Report to safeguard this resource for native peoples, the government of Ontario imposed a five-year freeze on the granting of new licences to non-native people and announced a five-year program to assist Indian bands in developing wild rice as an Indian resource.¹

¹Announced on May 16, 1978, the terms of the program are:

1. In accordance with current policy only Indian bands will be licenced to harvest wild rice in the Kenora and Dryden district for the coming 1978 season.
 2. Outside the Kenora and Dryden district all 1977 licences will be renewed for 1978 and annually thereafter.
 3. Effective immediately Ontario will extend its efforts to assist Indian licencees to develop appropriate technology and to increase utilization of the available crop with the primary objective of establishing an economic base for the involved Indian communities.
 4. The Tripartite Working Group on wild rice should give the highest priority to the determination of current and future markets for Ontario wild rice. A first report should be made no later than January of 1979.
 5. No additional licences will be issued to non-Indians during the next five years unless it can be demonstrated to the Tripartite Working Group that market potential for Ontario wild rice is sufficient to support an increased share of production by non-Indians without jeopardizing our efforts to establish wild rice production as a viable economic base for the Indian people.
 6. In keeping with the spirit of the Hartt Commission that all northerners should be involved in the determination of northern issues, we propose the Tripartite Working Group on wild rice be expanded to include representation of the Ontario Wild Rice Producers Association and the Ontario Metis and Non-Status Indian Association.
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The Issue of Wild Rice—A Critical Topic

Believed to have flourished in northwestern Ontario for as long as 4,000 years, wild rice was a prominent issue at Commission hearings in the northwest of the province, particularly in the Kenora-Rainy River area.

For at least the last 1,000 years, man has harvested rice in Ontario's north, the Ojibway offering wild rice when the first French missionaries came to northern Ontario in the late 1600's. Recognizing wild rice as an important food staple then as now, some historians attribute the native people's survival in this area to the availability of large stands of wild rice.

Over time, the annual harvesting of wild rice has become a ritual, an important component of Indian life, not just an activity providing food and income, but also an outlet for cultural and spiritual expression. This attitude to wild rice was conveyed to the Commission at its sittings in Kenora, Osnaburgh and Whitedog:

"The annual harvest of wild rice has been a cornerstone of the Ojibway culture and livelihood for centuries . . . The origin of many of our customs, social and spiritual, can be traced to the annual harvest of wild rice . . . Even today, ricing time continues to have important social and cultural features and assumes the qualities of a community festival. Cultural and physical survival of the Ojibway people of northwestern Ontario over the centuries have been bound to the harvesting of this precious natural resource."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2877)

The economic viability of some Indian communities was linked to wild rice harvesting:

"Our economic future is linked with our proposed development of our wild rice fields . . . We do not intend to give up those harvesting rights upon which we are greatly dependent, now and in the future."

(Osnaburgh Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1807)

Indian views on harvesting rights and resource ownership were clearly stated:

"My people wish to harvest wild rice in the traditional way. But, most importantly, my people look on wild rice as theirs to harvest by right. It is an Indian resource, not a white resource. We will fight anyone on any battleground to defend our wild rice rights."

(Man-O-Min Wild Rice Indian Cooperative, Sioux Lookout, p. 211)

But conflicting with these views is an Ontario statute and government policy:

"The ministry manages wild rice as one of the natural resources under the Wild Rice Harvesting Act. That

act envisages, if you will, that wild rice is a resource which is part of the total resource package belonging to all the people of the province . . . We are aware certainly . . . that some segments of the population feel that there is a different interpretation as to whose resource that is. The mandate we have now is that it is a resource of all the people of the province."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Sioux Lookout, p. 287)

Non-native northerners went on record as wishing to share in the wild rice resource.¹ A resident of Red Lake presented the Commission with a copy of the *Red Lake District News*, October 20, 1977, containing an article on wild rice harvesting. It described methods used by non-natives and the value to the community:

"George Green and Bob Urquart fashioned their own picker by laying poplar poles across the front struts of a Gull Wing aircraft. They then hung canvas behind the poles to catch the grain as it fell off. The rice picked was used to seed several lakes in the area . . . Locally, the benefits of this alternative industry are extensive. Not only does it bring money into town through harvesters themselves but it utilizes the support of other local businesses such as the Seaplane Service and the small airline operators."

¹Subsequent to the Commission's Interim Report, a group of non-native northerners involved in wild rice production joined together on April 8, 1978 to form the Wild Rice Producers Association. Their express purpose was to:

" . . . protect and promote the development of the wild rice industry in Ontario. We request the Ontario government to reject the recommendation on wild rice by Mr. Justice Patrick Hartt as it is discriminatory and not in the best interests of future economic growth and development for the north. We ask that the Ontario government adopt a policy for wild rice that would enable and encourage the development of this renewable resource in Ontario for the benefit of all Ontario residents."

(*Daily Miner and News*, Kenora, April 10, 1978)

Native groups opposed opening up and increasing the wild rice harvest:

"Another government policy currently proposes to open up the wild rice harvest as the potential of harvest has supposedly never been realized. True, it hasn't, if our minds are focused on maximum exploitation and mechanization. But that potential has been there for hundreds, maybe thousands of years, and it should be developed for the benefit of native peoples of this region . . . by people of native ancestry, whose livelihood and future depend on the land. We have a stake in the conservation and in the proper management of our resources into the future."

(Ontario Metis and Non-Status Indian Association, Kenora, p. 2642)

The size of wild rice harvests was linked by some people to changing water levels. At the Whitedog hearings, a 1975 Ministry of Natural Resources report (Adamson Report) was quoted as saying:

"Part of the reason for this wide variation (in annual harvests) is the effect of water levels in the Winnipeg River, which in turn controls water levels at Whitedog Lake. The development of a stable rice industry for the Whitedog Band depends on the ability to maintain relatively constant water levels in Whitedog Lake between the months of May and September."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2762)

In the Lake of the Woods Control Board area (Lake of the Woods, Rainy River, English River) Indians claimed that fluctuations in water level were detrimental to the rice crop. It was stated that wild rice, an aquatic plant, is extremely dependent on light among other factors, and cannot tolerate water depths beyond a maximum of six feet.

Two seemingly contradictory positions of the Ministry of Natural Resources were quoted by the Islington Band at Whitedog. In a letter to Grand Council Treaty # 3 of November 12, 1976, the then Minister of Natural Resources, Leo Bernier, stated:

"As you have pointed out, this was a bumper year for rice in the Treaty # 3 area, undoubtedly because below average run-off resulted in lower lake levels."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2766)

In a letter of September 9, 1977, the Assistant Director of Resources and Recreation in the Ministry of Natural Resources declared:

"We have no proof that water level stabilization will be the key to production in normally poor years."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2766)

Peter Lee, a professional consultant on wild rice, was quoted as saying:

"In northwestern Ontario the annual harvest of wild rice has varied from less than 20,000 pounds to as high as 1,300,000 pounds. This great variation in harvest is mainly the result of water level fluctuations."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2768)

With opinions differing markedly on the effect of water levels, calls for research to determine optimum growth requirements and harvesting procedures seem reasonable.

Also brought to the attention of the Commission were criticisms of Indians for inefficient harvesting of the wild rice crop, particularly during years of substantial crops.

The Commission heard conflicting views over what crop levels should be. For example, according to experts at the University of Minnesota as quoted by Treaty # 3:

"It is impossible to extend crop estimates from one lake to another, because frequently there are genetic variables in the rice from lake to lake. Different genetic strains yield different amounts of rice . . . The yields are also affected by differing water levels, nutrient differences, differences in availability of light and numerous other general environmental factors."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2883)

Estimates of crop levels by the Ministry of Natural Resources were criticized on the basis of experiments under controlled conditions at the University of Minnesota. There, screens protected the rice from birds. Insecticides, fertilizers and mechanical harvesters were used to increase yields, and a special strain of rice was used in which the whole head ripens at once, greatly simplifying harvesting:

"The best result from the experiment was an average yield of 2,000 pounds of green rice per acre. The Ministry of Natural Resources estimates that in our area, fields yield as high as 5,400 pounds per acre. In other words, under ideal conditions, the Minnesota experts got an average yield of only 2,000 pounds per acre, but the ministry counters estimated over twice those yields in Ontario wild rice areas."

(Treaty # 3, Kenora, p. 2881)

People agreed that there are areas which are frequently underharvested and others which could be productive. Action to remedy such situations had occurred in some areas:

"We are taking steps to ensure increased harvest and production . . . We have consulted and asked Ministry of Natural Resources officials to act in an advisory role on how to improve our harvest. We have talked, debated, and looked over proposals such as using mechanical harvesters, flood control dams, seeding . . . We have involved charity groups to fund and provide specialized consultants on our wild rice yield improvements project . . . Our band is trying to fully utilize this potentially large and valuable resource based industry."

(Grassy Narrows Reserve, Whitedog, p. 2795)

Some people thought the provincial government could have done more, particularly in working with the Indian people on wild rice development:

"Ontario does have more biological potential for wild rice than Minnesota, and if it takes a positive attitude, it is not yet too late to develop this potential. But if it sits back, and tries to ignore reality and progress, then ten years from now, the dream of an Ontario wild rice industry will be nothing more than a memory."

(Peter Lee, letter submitted to the R.C.N.E., February 2, 1978)

The Commission learned that the Ministry of Natural Resources has been considering revisions in the Wild Rice Harvesting Act to help ensure that harvest would increase. One way of doing this would be to open up wild rice harvesting to non-natives.

When asked to comment on the ministry's policy, a representative of the Ministry of Natural Resources stated that:

"... all policy at the present point in time is up for grabs."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Kenora, p. 2678)

The Kitchener-Conestoga Rotary Club was apprehensive about some of the policy changes that were being considered, particularly those that would open up harvesting to everyone under greater regulatory control:

"These ... (would) ... alter the very basis of the wild rice industry as it now exists ... (They would) impose a system of regimentation, permits, licences,

approvals and the like, which are totally alien to the Indians' way of life. They are in the finest bureaucratic tradition of the white man ... K-C Rotary proposes a moratorium on any such legislative amendments for at least five years, during which the wild rice industry, still in its infancy, can be given a chance to grow and flourish."

(Kitchener-Conestoga Rotary Club, brief submitted to the R.C.N.E., p. 3)

Some people were cynical about the government's consideration of new wild rice policies:

"The Ontario government recognized wild rice as an Indian resource and for years only Indian people have been allowed to harvest it. But wild rice is now considered a delicacy by white people. This means that piles of money can be made from harvesting and selling wild rice. Large profits can be made from exploiting our wild rice fields. And the rights of Indians have always been trampled when profits are concerned."

(Man-O-Min Wild Rice Indian Cooperative, Sioux Lookout, p. 210)

Chief Philip Gardner spoke to the Commission at Kenora:

"The government, of course, claims my people do not exploit the wild rice efficiently enough ... But allow me to point out once again that the white man at one time claimed that Indians were not efficient at harvesting buffalo, and everyone knows what happened to the buffalo."

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2859)



Land Use—Conflict over Priorities

Land use planning was a significant concern raised at the hearings of the Royal Commission. Life in the north centres on the land and natural resources. A number of the submissions were skeptical of the usefulness of the strategic land use planning tool of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Northerners were generally mindful and critical of past governmental land use trade-offs between conflicting users. Such arrangements, they maintained, were made without consideration for the social and economic ramifications to present and potential users of the land.

Planning—How Dynamic and Essential a Process?

To some northern residents, attempts at land use planning for the north conjure up images of southern bureaucrats dispassionately allocating northern resources, drawing up guidelines, defining restrictions and generally managing to overlook the real flavour of the land, the people the land supports, or any relation between the two.

In southern Ontario the relationship between the people and the land is considered subtle, obscured by an economic system based upon the processing of resources drawn from elsewhere and the high profile dominance of manufacturing and service-related industries. In the north, by contrast, the relationship between man and the land is close, raw, obvious and pronounced. Almost all economic activity is based on the utilization of the north's natural resources. This is as true for the trapper as it is for the iron ore open-pit miner, for the sawmill operator as it is for the commercial fisherman, for the hunting lodge owner as it is for the wild rice harvester.

This intimate relationship of northerners with nature ensures that anything which affects the use of the land will have economic, social and cultural ramifications.

Some complained to the Commission that land use planning carried out in Ontario is based upon meeting objectives, all of which are industrial market oriented and are determined in the province's capital, Toronto. These province-wide goals, critics maintained, are then reduced to regional and local objectives. In the planning process there is little public input and, due to their industrial orientation, these goals involve scant attention to local social, cultural and small business considerations.

One way of resolving future conflicts the Royal Commission was told, is to plan now which resource uses should have precedence in the years ahead. Speakers pointed out that government planning is seen by people as addressing that sort of question. Yet often government planning has been seen to have other



objectives — for example, meeting production and employment objectives — or trying to rationalize internal programs with potentially conflicting objectives. Northerners claimed that they recognize the need for comprehensive planning, for harmonizing proposed resource uses, like the Onakawana lignite mine and thermal electric generating plant, with regional development plans and local community aspirations.

Northerners who appeared before the Commission talked of the potential for positive change if residents of the north were themselves involved in the land use planning process, if resources were seen as more than answers to meeting industrial supply quotas, if long-term ecological, social and cultural impacts were given as much, or even greater, consideration than immediate economic benefits. In meeting the industrial needs of the south, the concerns of northerners should be incorporated into any planning objectives, it was suggested. More than one speaker foresaw the benefits for the northern environment that would ensue if local people were allowed to determine what northern priorities should be. Land use planning would follow accordingly, and would then begin to have some relevance to the people and the environment which that governmentally derived process affects.

At the base of northerners' concerns over land use planning was the issue underlying all of the submissions made to the Commission. Northerners seek control over the decisions which affect their day-to-day lives. They want to be informed, consulted and involved in all environmental decisions. Given the pervasive significance of land in the north, they feel it reasonable to be involved directly in the plans for the disposition of the natural resources of Ontario north of 50.

For Whose Use and for Whose Benefit?

In contrast to the approach in southern Ontario, man's relationship to the land in the north is very direct and pronounced. Almost all economic activity, be it copper mining, subsistence hunting, timber harvesting, trapping, or catering to sport fishermen, involves the direct utilization of the north's natural resources. Most of the remaining activity, predominantly service-related, is also directly related to primary resource extraction.

Resource based activities by their nature are confined to specific locations. Mining occurs where ore is present, trapping where the fur bearers are, and timber harvesting where trees are located. Because such diverse natural resources are often found together in the same location, land use conflicts arise. Competing demands for the northern resources have created sharp conflicts between such activities as trapping and mining, commercial and sport fishing, and forestry and tourism.

Yet few have answers to the dilemmas posed by conflicting and competing resource use demands, and how they could be accommodated. What can be done when trapping and tourism compete with forestry activities, when commercial fisheries discourage sport fishing?

"... demands on the land and water base of Ontario create that potential for conflict between various user groups. You have already heard some of these conflicts. For example, commercial fishing as opposed to sport fishing ... The fishing resource in Ontario must be apportioned on some equitable basis between commercial fishing interests and the sport fishing interests. We have already heard about the conflict between tourism and forestry, where the remote tourist establishment is sometimes impinged upon by road construction by the industry creating access roads."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Ear Falls, p. 773)

Accommodating competing resource uses requires agreement on valuing these uses. Which, for example, is economically preferable, or environmentally less harmful? Northerners did not agree on the value to be attached to resource uses, particularly for activities like trapping and wild rice harvesting, which have subsistence as well as commercial returns, and in some instances are considered to have social and cultural significance as well. Indians place different values on some resource uses than non-Indians.

Many northerners told Mr. Justice Hartt that large-scale extractive resource uses were the only real and possible sources for employment, reasonable incomes and the supply of "civilized" services and amenities.

The Commission soon realized that dealing with conflicting land uses, and the different values placed on the same use by different people in the north, was an extremely complex undertaking, even for government.

Substantial information about the Ministry of Natural Resources' strategic land use planning program was provided to the Commission. Land use, as the ministry uses the term, it was explained, is really synonymous with resource use.

The ministry's planning begins with its overall mandate:

"The goal of the ministry is to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and resource development for the continuous social and economic benefit of the people of Ontario and to administer, protect and conserve public lands and waters."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Sioux Lookout, p. 273)

Falling within this mandate are a number of provincial objectives involving, for example, the production of set amounts of wood, the creation of a certain number of jobs, the availability of so many cottage lots. The objectives appear to be set by government generally, with a strong role being played by the Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs (TEIGA) and its Design for Development program. It is TEIGA who has divided the province into five planning regions:

"Within that broad framework the ministry conducts its strategic land use plan to achieve its objectives and then progresses to the local level of planning which is basically a refinement of all facts essential to making decisions."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Ear Falls, p. 775)

The Commission was informed that the Ministry of Natural Resources has recently completed its broad land use plan for northwestern Ontario. The plan for the northeast is in the formative stages. These plans will result in the assignment of a portion of the provincial natural resource production objectives to either region. For example, it was revealed that the annual timber target for the northwest is 6.3 million cunits. The next step of this planning process entails local land use planning, by which the regional natural resource production targets are divided among the local areas or districts.

In northwestern Ontario a local land use study which covers an area of 80,000 square miles is being conducted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and is known as the West Patricia Land Use Plan. It will determine target rates for natural resource production, perhaps for the remainder of this century, and will broadly define future land uses within the West Patricia area for such uses as parks, forestry or wildlife harvesting and conservation.¹

¹The Royal Commission on the Northern Environment in its Interim Report of April 1978 recommended that a complete review and assessment of The West Patricia planning process, the relation to other development programs of the Ontario government, and with special emphasis on the Reed tract, be carried out by the Commission, with the proposals of the Ministry of Natural Resources considered as the focal point of the review.

While the Ministry of Natural Resources' planning process does attempt to reconcile conflicts between competing demands on northern resources, the Commission remains uncertain about the effect of production targets and the extent to which they are affected by localized knowledge of actual resource capacities, or the general capability of areas to survive certain kinds of resource uses.

The Commission did learn that a planning process like the West Patricia Land Use Plan is not an all-encompassing plan. It does not attempt to include alternate or new methods of development or resource use that could well help foster local economic stability, but accepts current kinds of uses as the best basis for future assessments.

In fact, the ministry's plans were described to the Royal Commission as no more than an attempt by the ministry to conduct its affairs in an orderly and open manner. Given the conflicts within its mandate, this is an admirable goal but, some people argued, this is not enough. Openness, from the ministry's perspective, will be secured by its public participation process:

"... so that we can get the views of the public as to what they want to see produced, and by public we mean each individual as well as the various groups and they have indeed been involved in the Strategic Land Use Plan for northwestern Ontario."

(Ministry of Natural Resources, Sioux Lookout, p. 282)

A number of groups and individuals asked whether the planning process of the Ministry of Natural Resources, and in particular the West Patricia Land Use Plan, was proceeding with a predetermined set of goals and objectives. Some were critical that a planning process should be proceeding simultaneously with the Commission's inquiry without pausing for the Commission's conclusions and recommendations:

"The province is going to insert \$6 million into that study (West Patricia Land Use Plan) . . . It is exactly the area that you and your Commission have studied over the past months. And I would have to question the mentality and the wisdom of the government of Ontario for making such a decision before giving you and your Commission the opportunity of at least presenting your first brief or summary of these meetings . . . and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that if you have any input to these ministries, that you and your Commission will have the influence to ask this West Patricia Land Use study to be terminated until at least you have an opportunity for some input."

(Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, Kenora, p. 3035)

Treaty # 9 stressed that the planning process did not take into account the views of those who disagreed with the ministry. The manner in which past public participation and consultation had occurred was criticized:

"The civil servants of the Ministry of Natural Resources wanted to meet with some of our people to supposedly inform them as to the direction they are moving. When you get back to Toronto that will be misinterpreted as consultation. There was no such consultation within the context of the meaning of the word as far as our people are concerned."

(Treaty #9, Moosonee, p. 3093)

Dr. John Spence, speaking on behalf of Treaty # 9, stressed the need for a truly comprehensive land use plan, which would incorporate native concerns and seriously consider alternatives:

"The Onakawana development as recommended by the task force should be placed in the context of a comprehensive development plan. It is not and cannot be at the present time, for the simple reason we do not have plans like this for this part of Ontario. Realistic alternatives must be evaluated before irreversible commitment of financial and other sources takes place. In seeking these alternatives I believe that the voice of the people of Grand Council Treaty # 9 must be listened to. Only then can Ontario come to grips with its north, and only then can all people of the Ontario Arctic watershed start to have confidence in planning and the economic growth of the north."

(Treaty # 9, Timmins, p. 1094)

Among those who were dissatisfied with government planning, most recognized the need. Treaty # 9 indicated it would do its own land use planning. Chief Gerald McKay spoke to the Commission about a proposed general land use plan for Treaty # 9's economic zones:

"The acquired information would pertain to our people, the natural resources, the present development and uses of the land and the needs and wants of our people. From the acquired data and our people's involvement we would present alternatives relating to future growth and development of resources in our economic zones and identify areas where developments should never take place."

(Big Trout Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1880)

The desire expressed by northerners to be involved in determining how the north's resources are to be used parallels what they told the Commission in a variety of ways. They want to be involved in the making of decisions affecting their lives. Such involvement, they felt, would help ensure that northern needs were met and that planning processes did not become too narrow or their focus be dominated by those who care little about the north or northerners.

